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10/587,314

07/26/2006

Takao Hasegawa

040894-7476

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MORGAN LEWIS & BOCKIUS LLP
1111 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20004

EXAMINER

DEXTER, CLARK F

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3724

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

04/30/2009

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

| | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. 10/587,314 | Applicant(s) HASEGAWA, TAKAO | |
| | Examiner Clark F. Dexter | Art Unit 3724 | |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 April 2009.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 2-12 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 13-16 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 26 July 2006 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>7/26/06; 8/28/07; 5/16/08</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election without traverse of Group VI, Species A (claims 1 and 13-16, the elected species being the punch) in the reply filed on April 16, 2009 is acknowledged. Claims 2-12 have been withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected invention/species.

Priority

2. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Information Disclosure Statement

3. The information disclosure statements filed on July 26, 2006, August 28, 2007 and May 16, 2008 have been received and the references listed thereon have been considered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Art Unit: 3724

5. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Watanabe et al., pn 4,763,167.

Watanabe discloses a device with every structural limitation of the claimed invention including:

a sheet table (e.g., 323);

an aftertreatment mechanism including a punching device (e.g., 302) for punching a paper sheet on the sheet table, wherein the aftertreatment mechanism performs an aftertreatment of a punching operation;

a closing type fence (e.g., 324) positioned at a leading end on a downstream side of the sheet table; and

a pair of feed rollers (e.g., 320a, 320b) disposed upstream of the closing type fence and including an upper roller (e.g., 320a) positioned on an obverse side of the sheet and a lower roller (e.g., 320b) positioned on a reverse side of the sheet,

wherein the feed rollers position the sheet on the sheet table by pushing the sheet onto the closing type fence, and

the closing type fence is opened after the aftertreatment to discharge the sheet.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 13-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Watanabe et al., pn 4,763,167 in view of one or both of Nakazawa, pn 6,361,036 and Okamoto et al., pub. no. 2005/0155474.

Watanabe discloses a device with almost every structural limitation of the claimed invention but lacks the sheet positioning structure including sensing structure to detect the actual sheet positioning. However, the Examiner takes Official notice that such sheet positioning structure is old and well known in a variety of configurations and in a variety of arts and provides various well known benefits including ensuring proper position of a workpiece prior to an operation being performed on the workpiece. Nakazawa and Okamoto each disclose at least one example of such a sheet positioning structure. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to provide such a sheet positioning structure on the device of Watanabe to gain the well known benefits including those described above.

Conclusion

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Clark F. Dexter whose telephone number is (571)272-4505. The examiner can normally be reached on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Boyer D. Ashley can be reached on (571)272-4502. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

**/Clark F. Dexter/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3724**

cfd
April 27, 2009